



NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The Bonneville Labor Market Area's (LMA) seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate for January remained constant at 4.1 percent over the month and one-tenth of a percentage point higher at a year-over-year comparison as shown in Northeast Idaho Table 1. The LMA saw very little activity during the month as construction awaited workable weather and temperatures.

Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, showed a decrease of three-tenths of a percentage point in the unemployment rate month-over-month to 3.7 percent, the same rate experienced in January 2001. The unemployment rates in Bingham County at 5.0 percent, Bonneville County at 3.7 percent, and Jefferson County at 4.1 percent, experienced little change over the month. Butte County had the largest change with an increase of three-tenths of a percentage point to 4.6 percent. Year-over-year, Bingham and Bonneville Counties showed an increase of one-tenth of a percentage point, Butte County experienced a decrease of four-tenths of a percentage point, and Jefferson County remained unchanged.

Of the other six counties in Northeast Idaho, Clark County's unemployment rate decreased two-tenths of a percentage point over the month to 4.1 percent. The current rate is four-tenths of a percentage point higher than January 2001. Custer County's unemployment rate increased 1.0 percentage point over the month to 7.9 percent. A slow down in *Construction* activity along with seasonal downturns in *Forest Service* were the reasons. The year-over-year comparison showed that the current unemployment rate in Custer County dropped one-tenth of a percentage point. Fremont County's rate of 6.4 percent was three-tenths of a percentage point decrease from the previous month and down nine-tenths of a percentage point from January 2001. Lemhi County's unemployment rate remained constant at 7.5 percent for the month, but was down 1.2 percentage points from January 2001 following the lingering effects from the forest fires in 2000. Madison County has the lowest unemployment rate in the state at 2.0 per-

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, & Jefferson counties

	Jan 2002*	Dec 2001	Jan 2001	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	81,260	83,580	80,990	-2.8	0.3
Unemployment	3,350	3,450	3,260	-2.9	2.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.1	4.1	4.0		
Total Employment	77,910	80,130	77,730	-2.8	0.2
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	79,790	82,580	79,650	-3.4	0.2
Unemployment	3,830	3,500	3,920	9.4	-2.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.8	4.2	4.9		
Total Employment	75,960	79,080	75,730	-3.9	0.3
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	59,850	61,450	60,480	-2.6	-1.0
Goods-Producing Industries	8,440	9,010	8,570	-6.3	-1.5
Mining & Construction	3,530	4,110	3,400	-14.1	3.8
Manufacturing	4,910	4,900	5,170	0.2	-5.0
Food Processing	2,480	2,470	2,880	0.4	-13.9
Ind. & Com. Mach. & Computer Equip.	460	440	440	4.5	4.5
All Other Manufacturing	1,970	1,990	1,850	-1.0	6.5
Service-Producing Industries	51,410	52,440	51,910	-2.0	-1.0
Transportation, Comm., & Utilities	2,260	2,360	2,340	-4.2	-3.4
Wholesale Trade	5,220	5,220	5,680	0.0	-8.1
Retail Trade	10,840	11,500	10,980	-5.7	-1.3
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,890	1,890	1,850	0.0	2.2
Services	20,560	20,890	20,490	-1.6	0.3
Government Administration	5,070	5,060	5,210	0.2	-2.7
Government Education	5,570	5,520	5,360	0.9	3.9

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

cent, down two-tenths of a percentage point from the previous month but the same as January 2001. Teton County's unemployment rate is up six-tenths of a percentage point from the previous month. The current rate of 3.8 percent is up nine-tenths of a percentage point from January 2001.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs (jobs by place of work) decreased 1,600 over the month to 59,850 in January. *Goods-Producing Industries* decreased 570 jobs, all in the *Construction* sector because of the seasonal slowdown of activity this time of year. *Service-Producing Industries* decreased 1,030 with *Retail Trade* (660 jobs) and *Services* (330 jobs) experiencing the most losses. *Retail Trade* had job losses in all sectors, with *General Merchandise* and *Eating & Drinking Places* having the largest losses as the holidays came to an end followed by conservative spending.

A year-over-year comparison showed a decrease of 630 jobs in *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs*, with the majority (500 jobs) in the *Service-Producing Industries*. An increase in *Construction* of 130 jobs was offset by decreases in *Manufacturing* of 260 jobs. A loss of 400 jobs in *Food Processing* overpowered the gain of 20 jobs in *Industrial & Commercial Machinery & Computer Equipment* and 120 jobs in *All Other Manufacturing*. *Wholesale Trade* drove the overall losses in *Service-Producing Industries* as extremely cold weather in early January prohibited fresh

produce from being delivered to packaging facilities, and intermittent layoffs were necessary. A small decrease in jobs in *Retail Trade* was expected after the holidays and a decrease in *Government Administration* came as city and state maintenance demand dropped off after fall cleaning and road repairs were completed. *Finance, Insurance & Real Estate* and *Services* showed small gains of 40 and 70 jobs, respectively. In the *Services* sector, the addition of 220 jobs in *Business Services* and 260 jobs in *Health Services* could not offset the more than 500 jobs losses in *Engineering & Management* after INEEL layoffs. *Government Education* showed a large increase of 210 jobs as local school districts continued to add staff to meet the demands of the growing school age population.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Bonneville County

- Papa John's, the nation's third-largest pizza chain, announced that they will open an outlet at 555 South Woodruff Avenue around April 1. Pioneer Junction from Cheyenne, Wyoming, has franchise rights for Papa John's in selected western states. They will run the outlet, but are training candidates from the local area to manage it. The company has more than 2,600 restaurants in 47 states.
- JP Realty, Inc. of Salt Lake City unanimously approved acquisition of their properties by General Growth Properties, Inc. The acquisition adds the Grand Teton Mall, along with 17 regional shopping malls, 26 community centers, and other industrial properties, to the company's impressive portfolio as one of the nation's largest shopping mall owners. General Growth Chief Executive John Bucksbaum envisions a three- to five-year campaign to attract national retailers to the new malls.
- Woodland Furniture of Idaho Falls was honored to receive a Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing. Annual prizes are given to companies recognized for streamlining their processes and cutting out waste based on the practice of Shigeo Shingo, the man who helped create Toyota's production system. Woodland Furniture was started in 1995 and now employs over 130 workers in its plant off South Yellowstone Highway. Woodland Furniture makes reproductions of antique furniture for clients all over the nation.
- Harker Design of Idaho Falls will open a showroom at South Yellowstone Highway and Heyrend Way. The 8,000-square-foot building will use half of the space for display and the other half for workspace. A warehouse also will be built. The showroom is expect to open in April. The company also has a showroom in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Products will include manufacturers' furniture and accessories, artwork, and rugs with a wide range of prices.

Fremont County

- Adason Adventures Video Store opened in St. Anthony the end of January. The video store, located at 9 North Bridge Street, also offers a hunting arcade, laser fire-arms, an indoor archery range, and archery supplies

for hunters. The business, owned by Bob Adams and Victor Nelson, is open noon to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday and noon to 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday.

Madison County

- The Rexburg Chamber of Commerce is taking over the grant administration and information distribution for Region 6 of the Idaho Department of Commerce and will become the hub for tourism information. The Chamber will soon get a toll-free number and start handling all tourist information requests for the nine counties that encompass the same boundaries as the Northeast Idaho area. Postage, copy, brochure, and phone expenses will be reimbursed to the Chamber through a regional tourism grant from the Department of Commerce. The office is located at 420 West Fourth South, next to Frontier Pies and Best Western. The hub was in Idaho Falls, but Director Mike Kuhns said the Idaho Falls Chamber released the grant in order to concentrate on its urban tourism grant for marketing Idaho Falls.
- Staples is closing its doors in Rexburg after three years of operation. The office supply chain store pointed to lackluster sales since product demand is not strong enough to carry the store's expenses and quotas. The store is still in the process of liquidation, but is planning complete closure at the end of April.
- Sugar City got its first gas station after the closure of two previous gas stations four years ago. Sugar City One Stop, a convenience store and gas station located at 6 East Center, will serve the town's population of 1,242. The announcement of BYU-Idaho increased construction in the city, and Brad Orme, owner and manager, feels that potential growth in the town will support the store. The store is open Monday through Saturday from 6:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. and is closed Sundays.
- The International Folk Dance Festival, annually held in Rexburg, will have some changes this year. The festival, in its seventeenth year in Idaho, will tour the state this summer. The Hart Gymnasium at BYU-Idaho, where main performances have always been held, will be under renovation this summer so the dancers will be on the road. The main performances will be held at Viking Stadium in Rexburg, Boise State Pavilion in Boise, and Holt Arena in Pocatello. The festival will start on July 12 in Boise, travel to Pocatello July 18-20, and will end up at Rexburg July 17-27. The festival includes an opening and closing ceremony, youth and adult culture classes and workshops, a parade, and performances every Friday and Saturday night.

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